

TOWN OF ROCKLAND

Board of Selectmen

Town Hall
242 Union Street
Rockland, Massachusetts 02370

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S OPEN SESSION held on
Wednesday, June 22, 2005 at 7:00 PM in the H. Bernard Monahan Memorial Room,
Town Hall, 242 Union Street, Rockland, Massachusetts 02370.**

**ATTENDANCE: Louis U. Valanzola, Lawrence J. Chaffee, Mary A. Parsons,
Keven D. Pratt and Kelli A. O'Brien-McKinnon**

Mr. Valanzola explained that tonight's meeting is to discuss the air base redevelopment plan. We will be voting on the plan and the zoning changes Monday night (June 27th at 7:00PM).

Mrs. Parsons – At some point, when are we going to tell the residents what is going on?
Mr. Valanzola – I wish that point would be right now. At this point it serves no useful function whatsoever to keep it from them because I don't think the numbers are going to change. We've met. We killed it. We've met. I think this only serves to keep a vital piece of information away from the voters out there. This really is an important piece of information. I just got involved really a week ago and they haven't moved. There is no indication that they are going to move. I got a call today from Senator Morrissey strongly urging me to go for this...take what we are getting, and take another one on the chin for the region ... as Rockland always does. He's supporting this plan, he knows what the numbers are out there and he knows what we are dealing with. He strongly urges us to go along with it. Mrs. Parsons – And what is the region doing for us? Mr. Valanzola – We've got a million gallons of water a day from French's Stream and additional traffic but the point is I think it's important that if the Host Community Agreement was a great deal or a great agreement ... if we were only off by a few dollars it would be one thing. If it's such a great deal what is the issue of not discussing it? I know we are still negotiating but we haven't moved, we are not negotiating. We sit down with them and we don't get anywhere. Mr. Pratt – There is no firm agreement in place I don't think we can discuss too much. Mr. Valanzola – I don't know how the voters can make a decision on Monday then...if they don't have that information before hand. Mr. Pratt – Unless we go to Town Meeting with a firm number in hand I'm not too anxious to go to Town Meeting without one in hand. Mr. Valanzola to Mr. Pratt – Do you think it's going to change much? Mr. Pratt – I have no idea until the five members of this board sit down with the committee from LNR and hear both sides of the story. Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon – I agree. There is nothing in writing yet. I haven't heard a definite number as of today so I think the best thing to do is to sit down and listen to LNR and listen to all of us as a board and see if the numbers work. Keep in mind it's the beginning of agreements between all of us and keep in mind it's still a good thing for the Town. The base development is still a good thing for the community. We have

to work with what we have and we have to do this as a board. We have to see if the new number is fair and workable. Mr. Plante – I was under the impression that Mr. Hall was coming tonight but I do not see him in the audience. You directed me to speak to the Town Moderator. We were correct If you go to Town Meeting and do not have that number and someone makes a motion to push Town Meeting off, you have to have a quorum; the motion has to have a second and has to be voted by the body to put Town Meeting off to a future date. Obviously, the body could vote not to put it off. Mr. Pratt – that is my biggest concern right now. If we go into Town Meeting without a firm number in hand and Town Meeting is not pushed off and they go ahead and vote this and it passes....both questions pass....and we are with out a number then (Mr. Pratt & Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon together....***we get nothing!***) Abington will get their \$2 million, Weymouth gets their money and then Rockland then becomes the real stepping stone of the South Shore...if you will. Mrs. Parsons – Does that mean that we accept any number that LNR gives? Mr. Pratt – Let's hear what they have to say. Mr. Valanzola – The issue is how do we get this out to the voters before Monday night? Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon – I would imagine that if we get a number we like in Executive Session tonight we still have three or four days to get it in the newspapers and radio to let the people know what the number is. Mr. Plante – We can put out a press release. Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon – Exactly and let them know whether this number is workable for the Town. It's the first step; we know there are other issues that we have to negotiate for as the phases begin. It is a stepping stone for the Town but like Keven pointed out....it could happen that if we postpone the meeting and they vote to pass anyways...then we get nothing. Then we are totally the losers. Mr. Valanzola – Maybe we can make this deal. Maybe we can decide tonight ... if we decide tonight by the end of our Executive Session that this is all the offer is we put out a press release tomorrow first thing. We can't keep going around in circles. Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon – You'll have three-four days to get it out. Mr. Valanzola – We should have been doing this a month ago...not three days before Town Meeting...this is a sin. I'm sorry, but I got the first copy of this a week ago tonight that you guys have been negotiating (Mr. Chaffee, Mr. Plante & Mr. Minahan). I come to find last night that it kind of slipped out that they also had meetings with Mayor Madden of Weymouth. Mr. Chaffee – “A” meeting with Mayor Madden....not meetings. Mr. Valanzola – Okay, I'll correct that. I did not know about the meeting, I do not know what took place at this meeting and I do not know if the other board members know either. Mr. Chaffee – Now I am going to defend myself. Just so that the people in this room are aware...we had which was “a negotiation session” yesterday between LNR, myself, Mr. Valanzola, Mr. Minahan, Mr. Pratt and Mr. Plante. Somehow the information from that meeting made the internet. Didn't make it from me....shouldn't have made the internet at all...somehow it got out. I'm going to let you figure it out...I have my ideas how it got out. The fact of the matter is the reason I tried to do this as secretly as I did was because, unfortunately, I can't trust some people to keep things that are supposed to be in-house....Mr. Valanzola – Let's not make accusations. Mr. Chaffee – I'm sorry...it made the internet. Somebody at that meeting yesterday released it. Mr. Valanzola – You know Larry it was on the internet before that...why don't you go back and see when that was posted. Stop reading the garbage. This is one of the reasons I wanted to have this meeting to dispel all the rumors. You shouldn't be reading the internet. Someone threw some numbers out there. Mr. Chaffee – It shouldn't have gotten out there. Mr. Pratt – Can I just point out that this board has not taken a formal vote on anything yet. We really can't

release any information until this board has heard all the information and taken a formal vote. Mr. Valanzola – I don't see us prepared to do that at this point...until we go into Executive Session but for the consideration for those who showed up this evening if anyone would like to be heard on this please step up to the podium and identify yourself and speak loudly because all we have is this tape recorder.

Terry Fancher (SSTTDC) – I don't want you to focus 100% on money in the next year or two. As you go into your deliberations please understand that if this plan goes through there is a chance for money in the future. We all talked about that money not being as much as we thought it would be but the fact of the matter is It's not all about the next two or three days. I want you to look at the future (I know you will) but whatever number you and LNR negotiate, factor in the future for it as well. Secondly, stop letting Weymouth call your shots. You are the second Town Meeting. They have a planning board meeting that is the day after your Town Meeting. They won't vote as a Town Council for two or three weeks. I don't know what numbers they are asking for. You are in the driver's seat and you don't realize it. You're using Weymouth and saying you want to see what Weymouth does...ask for your numbers. Mrs. Parsons – Who says we wanted to see what Weymouth does? Mr. Fancher – Don't let Weymouth dictate what you are going to ask for. Mr. Valanzola – We don't want to settle on a particular number and then find out two days later that theirs is going to be substantially higher. We are trying to look out for our Town as Weymouth is looking out for theirs and Abington looked out for theirs. I'm not sure why people get so offended when people try to look out for the best interests of our Town over other towns. We are supposed to lay down and be quiet about it...we are not going to do that. Mr. Fancher - All I am saying is defend your right for Rockland and don't worry about Weymouth. Worry about you, cut your deal with your Town and let them worry about theirs later. With LNR behind closed doors they will probably give you ranges but I would be very surprised if the numbers out there on the internet become the reality of what Weymouth actually is. Finally, we have had discussions with Abington and I know that it is hard to understand because it's all about the money, but there will be issues that you have that you think are real important to the Town of Rockland...and they are. Our board has a meeting tomorrow night and we scheduled a meeting for Monday night just prior to your Town Meeting at 6:00PM. If there are issues that you believe that we as a board should be aware of that makes it so you can look at it and say "we got what we needed" and I don't care what it is, let us know. Don't look at it and say you can't give us something...we might be able to. My point is we are there tomorrow night and we will be there on Monday evening. You need to understand that in Abington we had a meeting at 6:00PM and their Selectmen didn't actually vote until 6:15PM to endorse the plan and there were two-three things that they were looking for...so don't just say there is nothing that we can offer because we are there to help. Our board of directors is appointed by you and I'm appointed by them so if there is anyway we can help...I'm not talking about the negotiations, I'm talking between your board and our board I hope you will let us know what that is.

Mr. John Ward (SSTTDC) – Mr. Chaffee you made a comment that there were negotiations conducted last night and contents of that were released on the internet? Mr. Chaffee – to some degree information from yesterday's meeting was released on the internet. I don't know who did it and I don't know why but I heard about it today. I'm

a little disappointed. Mr. Valanzola – Time out Larry you’re making accusations....nobody knows if it was even you that posted it on the internet. Mr. Chaffee – I don’t post on the internet. Don’t even try. Mr. Valanzola – Let’s keep this going forward. Mr. Ward – If that took place that kind of stunt puts in jeopardy financial plans for this Town. At least financial benefits. I’ll just say this to all of you...It’s time for the majority of the Rockland Board of Selectmen to act in the best interest of the Town. Make every effort to conclude negotiations with LNR and reach an agreement before Town Meeting. Mr. Valanzola – When I sit down and negotiate with someone there is usually give and take. We sat down with them last week we got a number on Friday and it actually went down...that’s not give and take...we sat down with them last night they gave us a number that was a number. As far as I am concerned I think the negotiations are over, I’m hoping we can go into that back room tonight and do something. There is no give and take. We are just taking it. Mrs. Parsons – You represent this Town on the SSTT Board of Directors, so far I haven’t seen you or John Rogers actually represent the interests of this Town. When Abington wanted Union Street opened you two sat there with your mouths shut. You never once stepped up to the plate and represented this Town. Any time Weymouth wanted something you two kept your mouths shut. I’m sorry, you are supposed to represent the best interests of this Town and I don’t see you doing it. Mr. Ward....Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out that Mrs. Parsons has made more false/misleading statements about this reuse plan and her involvement in it than anyone else I know of. Let me take this a little further...what Rosie Ruiz was to the Boston Marathon; Mary Parsons is to this reuse plan. Mrs. Parsons – I’ve backed up my statements with facts and documentation, you haven’t backed up.....Mr. Valanzola – Let’s stop.....Mr. Ward – Mrs. Parsons has lied to the residents and voters of this Town. She had claimed falsely that she personally authored the no cost provision of the base reuse plan. As a former member of the base reuse plan I am on record and so are members of that board that Mrs. Parsons is false. As a matter of fact, I believe it was the chairman of the reuse committee that stated that Mary Parsons was a spectator to the process not a participant. She had input like any other citizen but did not do that.....Mr. Valanzola – alright, alright. Mrs. Parsons – Excuse me. Now you are lying John and there are people who can back up the no cost.....Mr. Valanzola – Let me interrupt and ask Brad a question. Mr. Plante brought the zoning and reuse to our attorneys to take a look at it because part of the problem is people are out there going on about all sorts of information. This way maybe our attorneys can offer some insight and an opinion for us that maybe some people will take a little bit differently. I don’t want this to turn into accusations going back and forth and who did what. We only have a few days now before Town Meeting, let’s see if we can move forward here in a positive light. Dr. John W. Rogers – I would like to respectfully request that the BOS adjourns to Executive Session and stay there until you reach an agreement. As far as Mrs. Parsons’ comments about me....on my worst day I represent this Town better than Mrs. Parsons ever would. Mr. Valanzola – People did take the time to come out here. Before we adjourn this is the last opportunity. Mr. Millette – I would have to respectfully disagree with Selectmen Chaffee and representatives Rogers and Ward about the secrecies of these numbers of what we get. The citizens of this Town will vote this through eventually (whether we postpone the meeting or not) the numbers do not belong hidden behind closed doors as to what we will get and what we won’t get. Obviously there are numbers out there that we have all heard. We’ve heard of demands from Weymouth that we do have to look into. We do not want to go in and settle for less than we actually deserve to have and

then have Weymouth come out and throw a trump card and get everything. Mr. Baker – Is there anything that they have agreed to so far that we can let out? BOS – No. Mr. Valanzola – Let's just say one group will be very satisfied. Mr. Bromberg – In a Rockland Open Space Meeting last night, we brought up some mitigation issues. I would like to talk to someone before you go into Executive Session or if you allow me to go into Executive Session and explain the mitigation so it won't be left out. Mr. Valanzola – I don't see why we couldn't accommodate that at the beginning. Mr. Bromberg – I would like to ask what are the benefits going to be for the three towns, what are the benefits going to be for Rockland? Mr. Valanzola – Personally, I think it's a really good plan. I like the concept the problem I've had with it from the beginning is that we are dumping it in the middle of three towns. The egress points to it aren't there that would have been there 60 years ago had this property been developed over the natural course of 60 years. The questions I answered the other night with regards to the traffic, sewer discharge and other issues still stand. We are not going to answer all the questions before Town Meeting and I think it's important to get as many answered as we can. If attorneys can look at this and tell us that we are protected (the zoning the way it is written is going to protect your Town...there is nothing in there to worry about) I'd feel a lot more comfortable. I hope we can get those answers from our attorneys as soon as possible. It's difficult to know every aspect of something like this. I don't expect these guys to come to us and say (right to the penny) this is what it is going to be and how it is going to be developed. With a project of this magnitude...you are building a city. Mrs. Parsons – We are getting thousands of automobiles dumped on our roads, we are getting 1.1 million gallons of water going down French's Stream (it's not going down old swamp river) basically we are getting all the negative impacts ... the other towns are pushing it off onto us. Mr. Pratt – What I think a lot of people are missing is that 80% of the buildings are going to be in Weymouth and 42% of the revenues generated from that development are going to come back to Rockland. Mrs. Parsons – You are assuming that, you don't know that. Do you know how much land is buildable in Rockland and how much isn't? Disagreement ensued between Mr. Pratt and Mrs. Parsons. Mr. Valanzola asked Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon if she wanted to make a last statement. Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon – I've stated how I feel about the whole thing, I'm positive about it. I just think we have to work the numbers.

Motion: Mr. Chaffee to adjourn (time not indicated) and enter Executive Session

Second: Mr. Pratt

Vote: 5-0 Mr. Chaffee-yes, Mrs. Parsons-yes, Mr. Pratt-yes, Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon-yes and Mr. Valanzola-yes

LAWRENCE J. CHAFFEE
VICE-CHAIRMAN

BRADLEY A. PLANTE
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR